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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OIIP](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JULY 07, 2009

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for Afghan transit" and a promise to "reduce nukes." Also front paged were reports that the "Pak Army claimed to have killed 14 militants in attacks on suspected hideouts in Swat." Pegged to it were reports that chief of the defunct Tehrik Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM), Sufi Mohammad, "surfaced in Peshawar" after his "two months of mysterious disappearance." All dailies also gave prominent coverage to Pakistani scientist, Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's statement before a U.S. District Court in New York "rejecting U.S. government's allegations of shooting American soldiers and FBI agents in Afghanistan." All Pakistani newspapers gave wide display to the killing of "162 people in ethnic riots in Xinjiang region of China."

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"Russia Allows U.S. Military To Use Its Soil For Afghan Transit"
"Dawn" (07/07)

"Russia agreed on Monday to let the United States fly troops and weapons across its territory to Afghanistan, a move hailed by Washington as a valuable contribution towards helping U.S. forces fighting the Taliban. A joint declaration also announced agreements on nuclear arms cuts and on replacing a key disarmament treaty, including figures for reduction in nuclear warheads to between 1,500 and 1,675 within seven years."

"Fourteen Killed In Attack On Swat Hideouts" "Dawn" (07/07)

"The army claimed to have killed 14 militants during the operation in Swat on Sunday and Monday. Four soldiers suffered injuries. According to the ISPR, security forces captured several terrorists and seized 50 mules loaded with arms and ammunition, medicines and foodstuff in Banjut area."

"Maulana Sufi Re-Emerges In Peshawar" "Dawn" (07/07)

"Maulana Sufi Muhammad, the chief of the defunct Tehrik Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi's (TNSM) surfaced on Monday - two months after he mysteriously went missing in Amandarra, the headquarters (TNSM), in Malakand region. An immediate relative, who introduced himself as Bakht Wahid, told 'Dawn' by phone that Sufi along with his family including women and children reached Peshawar in the afternoon."

"Dr. Aafia Denies Shooting U.S. soldiers In Afghanistan" "Daily Times" (07/07)

"Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani neuroscientist currently detained in the U.S., on Monday rejected the U.S. government's allegations that she tried to kill American soldiers and FBI agents in Afghanistan. 'I did not shoot anybody, and I did not fire at anybody,' Aafia, 37, told a U.S. District Court, which was holding a hearing to determine whether she was competent to stand trial."

"162 Killed In China Ethnic Riots" "Daily Times" (07/07)

"At least 162 people have been killed in rioting in China's northwestern region of Xinjiang, with the government blaming exiled

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separatists for the Muslim area's worst case of unrest in years. Hundreds of rioters have been arrested, the official Xinhua news agency reported."

"Military To Go After Former Proxy Forces: Zardari" "The News" (07/07)

"President Asif Ali Zardari has broken with decades of strategic policy of Pakistan by declaring that military will turn its guns on extremist groups it formerly supported as proxy forces in its battles with India, reports a London-based English daily. Zardari said in an interview with 'The Daily Telegraph' that operations would in the future target the figures who were the military's 'strategic assets.' 'I don't think anybody in the establishment supports them anymore,' he said."

"India Boosts Military Spending To \$29.3 Billion" "Dawn" (07/07)

"Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee unveiled a populist budget on Monday but kept intact a 34 per cent hike for defence he had announced in the interim pre-poll allocation in February. While India's defence spending would grow to \$29.39 billion, Mukherjee said the country would spend \$562 million exclusively for boosting border security and modernizing its police force."

"Pak Army Still Consider India A Threat: Mullen" "The Post" (07/07)

"Despite President Asif Ali Zardari's assertion that a Taliban insurgency, not India, was the biggest threat to Islamabad, the Pakistani army still considers India a 'threat,' United States' top army official indicated, reported Outlook India Monday. In an interview to CBS 'Face the Nation,' Chairman of America's Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen said the Pakistan Army Chief Ashfaq Parvez Kayani is focused on both -- the threat from India and that from internal insurgency."

"U.S. Drone Violate Pak Areas In North Waziristan Agency" "Pakistan Observer" (07/07)

"The U.S. drones once again violating Pakistan's sovereignty hovered over different areas of North Waziristan on Monday creating panic among local people."

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"North Waziristan Militant Dens Shelled: Seven Dead" "Dawn" (07/07)

"Seven militants were killed and several others injured when jets

shelled militant hideouts in North Waziristan on Monday."

"Four Militants Killed In Bajaur" "The News" (07/07)

"At least four militants were killed and six others sustained injuries as the security forces intensified operation against the Taliban insurgents in Charamang Valley of Nawagai tehsil in the restive Bajaur Agency on Monday."

"25 suspects held In Dera Ismail Khan" "The News" (07/07)

"The security forces launched a search and clean-up operation and arrested 25 suspected persons from different parts of Kulachi tehsil near Dera Ismail Khan on Monday."

"Militant's House Blown Up" "The News" (07/07)

"Security forces blew up the house of a militant commander Sahib Muhammad with explosives and arrested his son in Ouch area of Dir Lower on Monday."

"Some Seminaries Patronizing Terror, Says Sunni Council" "Dawn" (07/07)

"Terrorists are becoming active in some seminaries in Punjab, using them for storing arms and ammunition, according to leaders of the Sunni Ittehad Council, an association of some groups of the Barelvi school of thought. After a meeting of the Council in Lahore on Monday, Pir Afzal Qadri said: 'Some seminaries are patronizing terrorists who are stockpiling lethal arms there.'"

Editorials/Op-eds

"Up For Trouble," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (07/07)

"Unfortunately, Vice-President Biden's statement virtually amounts to giving Israel a green signal to attack Iran. Contrary to that,

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the observation made by Admiral Mullen, that an attack would be disastrous, is closer to reality. It is pragmatic and ought to be heeded by other U.S. centers of power as well. By any reckoning, any sort of adventurism against Iran, especially armed action, would result in a catastrophe. The global financial crisis is still not over and Iran, which is one of the biggest producers of oil, is central to world stability. Besides, it could retaliate, or worse still create trouble for the U.S. forces in Iraq. Given the gulf that keeps on widening between Muslims and the Western world, the U.S. Administration must adopt a course that is in line with President Obama's address at the Cairo University, in which he highlighted the need to resolve differences with Iran on a conference table."

"Threat That Iran Could Have Avoided," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (07/07)

"The Biden statement has been taken as a green signal to Israel to attack. One thought the US would restrain Israel knowing that a strike against Iran would destroy the world's most strategically important region.... The regional dominance of Iran was enhanced further by the futile American invasion of Iraq and Israel's unwise intervention in Lebanon.... But Tehran has been too aggressive in its pursuit of a policy of challenge to care for the muted Arab response on the other side of the Gulf. President Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Khamenai could have avoided the bitterness of rhetoric of threats to keep the Arabs allayed."

"The U.S. And Threat Of Israeli Attack On Iran," an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (07/07)

"The U.S. Vice President, Joseph Biden, has said that America would not stop Israel if it took a military action against Iran in order to deal with Iranian nuclear threat.... AP analyst has described the Vice President's statement as a green signal for Israel to attack Iran. We agree with the AP. American Vice President's statement shows that American rulers are longing to see Israeli planes bombing the alleged Iranian nuclear installations.... Joseph Biden's statement also shows that America is interested in widening the scope of war against the Muslim world, but cannot do that due to certain reasons. America has now signaled its policeman in the Middle East to do the needful."

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"Will U.S. Do This Nonsense (Allowing Israel To Attack Iran)," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-right sensationalist Urdu daily "Ummat" (cir. 33,000) (07/07)

"This is surely a worrisome news report for the Muslims across the world that Israel has finally taken a decision to attack Iran. Israel after getting support and a 'go ahead' from the U.S. has started preparations for an attack. The attack on Iran would stir up the bitter memories of U.S. attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq. Has the U.S. really decided to take a foolish decision to support Israel at the cost of jeopardizing world peace and stability?"

"U.S. Go-Ahead For Israeli Attack On Iran," an editorial in the Karachi-based right-wing pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Urdu daily "Jasarat" (cir. 3,000) (07/07)

"Biden's statement is a license to kill for Israel, though Israel does not need this license as the country has already been acting unilaterally against all its neighbors including Palestinians. Israel had the support of the U.S. while striking at Iraq's nuclear facilities in the past, and when the issue was raised in the UN, it was the United States that blocked the move. The present statement is the continuity of the old practice that establishes that the U.S. has only one friend that is Israel."

"Israel's Blatant threat To Iran," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (07/07)

"There are clear indications that the United States is encouraging Israel to go for military aggression against Iran.... The statement of the U.S. Vice President is indicative of the fact that the hostile approach has not changed. The remarks of Biden are being interpreted by knowledgeable circles as a go-ahead signal to Israel to carry out aggression against Iran.... The timing of the statement by the U.S. Vice President and Israeli claims is important.... We are sure that any action against Iran would be strongly resisted not only by countries of the region but the entire Muslim world and peace-loving people of the globe."

"Heinous Conspiracies Against Iran," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt"

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(cir. 150,000) (07/07)

"American Vice President Joe Biden has said that America would not come in the way of Israel if it decided to attack Iran in order to destroy its nuclear program. On the other hand, Sunday Times has claimed in an Israeli defense sources report that Saudi Arabia has allowed Israel to use its airspace for attacking Iran.... While the conspiracies to end Iran's nuclear program are on, a vile propaganda has been unleashed against Saudi Arabia that it has allowed use of its airspace for the attack. This propaganda has been initiated by the west to sow the seed of dissension among the Muslim countries."

"U.S. Should Stop Backing Israel," an editorial in the leading mass circulation populist, often sensational Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (07/07)

"U.S. open support and backing for Israeli aggressive designs against Iraq, Iran, Palestine and Lebanon have not only jeopardized the global peace, but also put the stability of the region in danger. In this state of affairs, international organizations like UNO must prefer to get resolve these outstanding issues without delay, or else, it will meet with its end like that of the League of Nations. It is also essential for the Muslim world to wake up from its deep slumber, and work out a concrete policy to deal with this unparalleled situation."

"U.S. Signal To Israel For Operation Against Iran," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 10,000) (07/07)

"U.S. attempts to change the government in Iran have taken a new turn. A recent statement by Vice President Joseph Biden has added to the concerns about the situation in the Middle East. Mr. Biden has said, "The U.S. does not have the authority to stop Israel if it attacks Iran." This statement is a green signal, prompting Israeli aggression against Iran.... President Obama's efforts to improve ties with Iran soon after he assumed office, were praised around the world. However, the manner in which Israel, U.S. and the West reacted to the Iranian election results demonstrated that these countries wish to spread unrest in Iran. And now Mr. Biden's statement shows that all this is being done in support of Israel."

"Swat Operation Should Be Taken To Its Logical End," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (07/07)

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"The war on terror is proceeding on the right track, however, the situation gets a little shaky when the U.S. launches missile strikes in certain Pakistani areas. The U.S. needs to share information with the Pakistan Army instead of taking action on its own. If there are terrorists in an area, the U.S. should let Pakistan Army carry out the operation as it is the force fighting against these elements in these areas. When both the countries [Pakistan and U.S.] are against terrorism and both have the same target, it is not befitting for one to bypass the other, thereby creating mistrust."

"The Internal Threat," an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (07/07)

"Speaking at a Pakistan Naval Academy event in Rawalpindi, Chief of the Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani said, 'while external threats continue to exist, it is the internal threat to Pakistan that needs immediate attention.' It is basically a reiteration of our stated position that, contrary to the counsel offered by our Western friends, Pakistan must remain watchful of its eastern border while paying immediate attention to the extremist threat."

"Slow Going," an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (07/07)

"The battle for Swat is taking longer than expected. A month ago we were told that it was all over bar the shouting, that there were just 'pockets of resistance' and it would 'soon' be safe for the IDPs to return to their homes. Some have, but the majority have not and they remain marooned in the camps and schools and private homes.

There is still no date for their return apart from a vague suggestion that it will be 'this month.' As the battle for Swat grinds on, the battle for Waziristan is slowly gathering pace and that will produce its own fresh crop of IDPs. Resources are stretched dreadfully thin, the aid agencies are struggling and running out of food and money; and the monsoon fast approaches.... Even more sadly, the basic services they can avail now are unlikely to be available on their return home; and women remain the eternal losers in the battles fought by men."

"Time To Listen To Saner Voices On Pakistan-Afghanistan-United States," an op-ed by Imran Khan in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (07/07)

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"Can Pakistan afford these operations for even the next five years? How will we deal with the continuing flow of displaced people - or how long will the IDPs survive living as nomads in their own country? How are we planning to stop the radicalization of the youth in such conditions? Where will we find the resources to eventually rehabilitate these displaced families, given the massive infrastructure damage? What about the impact on the economy if these operations continue endlessly? Already the political situation in the NWFP is getting worse by the day. We have created perfect environment for our enemies to exploit tensions emerging from the current chaos- ethnic, provincial, religious (Shia/Sunni, Deobandi/Barelvi) and class (as in Swat). The critical question is: what is the solution?... However there are voices within the U.S. political and administrative structures that are becoming more skeptical about the U.S. policy in Afghanistan. For instance, Graham Fuller, the former CIA Station Chief in Kabul wrote in the International Herald Tribune that there was no military solution to the problem in Afghanistan. According to him, Pakistan was 'cracking under the pressure' put on it to 'do more' by the U.S. and that the Pakistan security forces could control the militancy within its borders provided NATO leaves Afghanistan. If sane voices in the U.S. can see the writing on the wall, why is our leadership still going down a suicidal course for their own vested interests - destroying the military and the nation in the process?"

"War Without An End," an op-ed by Shahid Zulfikar in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (07/07)

"If we are seeking to overcome militancy in one go through the military, it would be an impossible task. Eliminating Mehsud would be a military achievement but will not end the militancy which has permeated the entire society. Historically the FATA tribes have resisted any foreign interference and they will continue to take up arms as long as the U.S./NATO forces remain in Afghanistan. The prime objective here should be to keep them away from militancy in our settled areas rather than trying to subdue them.... These are difficult times for the country. The American strategic interests in the neighborhood will keep us entangled in 'their' war on terror. That does not require us to be oblivious of our interests."

"A Decisive Shift," an op-ed by Rasul Bakhsh Rais in the

Summary: National political developments dominated headlines in all newspapers on Tuesday. Several major dailies, however, highlighted U.S.-Russia agreement "allowing U.S. military to use Russian soil for Afghan transit" and a promise to "reduce nukes." Also front paged were reports that the "Pak Army claimed to have killed 14 militants in attacks on suspected hideouts in Swat." Pegged to it were reports that chief of the defunct Tehrik Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM), Sufi Mohammad, "surfaced in Peshawar" after his "two months of mysterious disappearance." All dailies also gave prominent coverage to Pakistani scientist, Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's statement before a U.S. District Court in New York "rejecting U.S. government's allegations of shooting American soldiers and FBI agents in Afghanistan." All Pakistani newspapers gave wide display to the killing of "162 people in ethnic riots in Xinjiang region of China."

Most major dailies ran editorials on the roadmap for justice that has been spelled out by Chief Justice Chaudhary in the

recently-concluded conference on the implementation of the National Judicial Policy. However some papers editorialized others pressing issues including the impending threat of assault on Iran and the ongoing military offensive etc. Commenting on the Vice President Biden's remarks, the center-right national English daily "The Nation," observed that "by any reckoning, any sort of adventurism against Iran, especially armed action, would result in a catastrophe." The Lahore-based liberal English daily, "Daily Times," commented that "the Biden statement has been taken as a green signal. One thought the U.S. would restrain Israel knowing that a strike against Iran would destroy the world's most strategically important region." The center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan," observed that the Vice President's statement "shows that America is interested in widening the scope of war against the Muslim world, but cannot do that due to certain reasons. It (America) has now signaled its policeman in the Middle East to do the needful." End Summary.

News Stories

Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (07/07)

"The anti-American sentiment in the context of Afghanistan was carefully cultivated by Taliban sympathizers in Pakistan, which further nurtured the image of the Taliban as an 'anti-imperialist force' and some kind of liberators. Some leaders, mostly from the religious parties, justified crossing of the Pak-Afghan border by the Pakistani Taliban much like the Mujahideen that fought against the former Soviet Union.... But finally, the people of Pakistan, the silent majority, have woken up to the threat that the Taliban and their supporters in different political formations pose to society and, in a broader context, to the image of Muslims and Islamic civilization.... The people in Swat and FATA have been held hostage and have suffered the cruelty and totalitarianism of the Taliban for too long.... Many people in Pakistan and outside the country believe that the Taliban are a worse enemy than any other internal or external adversary that we have ever faced."

"America's New Reach," an op-ed by Shahid Javed Burki in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/07)

"Rather than locking in a level now for military aid which might not be in line with rapidly changing Pakistani capabilities and commitment, the bill buys flexibility for the U.S. administration by leaving the quantum and content of military support to be determined on a year-by-year basis. The final shape of U.S. assistance to Pakistan will be determined by the political process in which ethnic lobbies will play an important role."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson